



Department of Defense DIRECTIVE

NUMBER 1340.20

July 14, 2003

Certified Current as of November 21, 2003

GC, DoD

SUBJECT: Settling Personnel and General Claims and Processing Advance Decision Requests

References: (a) Section 3702 of title 31, United States Code
(b) Section 2575 of title 10, United States Code
(c) Section 2771 of title 10, United States Code
(d) Section 420 of title 24, United States Code
(e) through (i), see enclosure 1

1. PURPOSE

This Directive establishes policy and assigns responsibilities for settling personnel and general claims under references (a) through (h) and for processing requests for an advance decision under reference (i).

2. APPLICABILITY AND SCOPE

This Directive applies to:

2.1. The Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Military Departments, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Combatant Commands, the Office of the Inspector General of the Department of Defense, the Defense Agencies, the DoD Field Activities, and all other organizational entities in the Department of Defense (hereafter referred to collectively as "the DoD Components").

2.2. The Coast Guard, when it is not operating as a Service in the Navy under agreement with the Department of Homeland Security, and the Commissioned Corps of

the Public Health Service (PHS) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), under agreements with the Departments of Health and Human Services and Commerce (hereafter referred to collectively as "the non-DoD Components").

3. DEFINITIONS

The terms used in this Directive are defined at enclosure 2.

4. POLICY

It is DoD policy that:

4.1. The claim settlement and advance decision authorities that, by statute or delegation, are vested in the Department of Defense or the Secretary of Defense shall be exercised by the officials designated in this Directive. Enclosure 3 describes the claims included under these functional authorities.

4.2. Claims shall be settled and advance decisions shall be rendered in accordance with pertinent statutes and regulations, and after consideration of other relevant authorities.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1. The General Counsel of the Department of Defense shall:

5.1.1. Settle claims that the Secretary of Defense is authorized to settle under references (a) through (h).

5.1.2. Consider, and grant or deny, a request under reference (a) to waive the time limit for submitting certain claims.

5.1.3. Render advance decisions under reference (i) that the Secretary of Defense is authorized to render, and oversee the submission of requests for an advance decision arising from the activity of a DoD Component that are addressed to officials outside the Department of Defense.

5.1.4. Develop overall claim settlement and advance decision policies; and promulgate procedures for settling claims, processing requests for an advance decision (including overseeing the submission of requests for an advance decision arising from the activity of a DoD Component that are addressed to officials outside the Department of Defense), and rendering advance decisions. Procedures for settling claims shall include an initial determination process and a process to appeal an initial determination.

5.2. The Heads of the DoD Components shall:

5.2.1. Establish procedures within their organization for processing claims and for submitting requests for an advance decision arising from it's activity in accordance with this Directive and responsibilities promulgated under subparagraph 5.1.4.

5.2.2. Pay claims under references (c) and (h), if applicable.

5.2.3. Ensure compliance with this Directive and policies and responsibilities promulgated under subparagraph 5.1.4.


5.3. The Heads of the Non-DoD Components, concerning claims arising from that Component's activity under references (a), (b), (c), or (g), shall:

5.3.1. Establish procedures within their organization for processing claims and for submitting requests for an advance decision in accordance with this Directive and responsibilities promulgated under subparagraph 5.1.4.

5.3.2. Pay claims under reference (c), if applicable.

6. EFFECTIVE DATE

This Directive is effective immediately.



Paul Wolfowitz
Deputy Secretary of Defense

Enclosures - 3

- E1. References, continued
- E2. Definitions
- E3. Claims Description

E1. ENCLOSURE 1

REFERENCES, continued

- (e) Section 4712 of title 10, United States Code
- (f) Section 9712 of title 10, United States Code
- (g) Section 554 of title 37, United States Code
- (h) Section 714 of title 32, United States Code
- (i) Section 3529 of title 31, United States Code

E2. ENCLOSURE 2

DEFINITIONS

E2.1. DEFINED TERMS

E2.1.1. Armed Forces. The Army, the Navy, the Air Force, the Marine Corps, and the Coast Guard.

E2.1.2. Claim. A demand for money or property under references (a) through (h).

E2.1.3. Secretary Concerned. The Secretary of the Army, addressing matters concerning the Army. The Secretary of the Navy, addressing matters concerning the Navy, the Marine Corps, and the Coast Guard when it is operating as a Service in the Navy. The Secretary of the Air Force, addressing matters concerning the Air Force. The Secretary of Homeland Security, addressing matters concerning the Coast Guard when it is not operating as a Service in the Navy. The Secretary of Health and Human Services, addressing matters concerning the PHS. The Secretary of Commerce, addressing matters concerning the NOAA.

E2.1.4. Settlement. A claim and the amount due that is administratively determined to be valid.

E2.1.5. Uniformed Services. The Army, the Navy, the Air Force, the Marine Corps, the Coast Guard, and the Commissioned Corps of the PHS and the NOAA.

E3. ENCLOSURE 3
CLAIMS DESCRIPTION

The Secretary of Defense is authorized to perform the claim settlement and advance decision functions for claims under the following statutes:

E3.1.1. Reference (a) concerning claims in general when there is no other settlement authority specifically provided for by law.¹

E3.1.2. Reference (b) concerning the disposition of unclaimed personal property on a military installation.

E3.1.3. Reference (c) concerning the final settlement of accounts of deceased members of the armed forces (but not the National Guard).²

E3.1.4. References (d), (e), and (f) concerning the disposition of the effects of a deceased person who was subject to military law at a place or command under the jurisdiction of the Army or Air Force or of deceased residents of the Armed Forces Retirement Home.

E3.1.5. Reference (g), concerning the sale of personal property of members of the Uniformed Services who are in a missing status.

E3.1.6. Reference (h), concerning the final settlement of accounts of deceased members of the National Guard.²

¹ This includes claims involving Uniformed Services members' pay, allowances, travel, transportation, payment for unused accrued leave, retired pay, and survivor benefits, and claims for refunds by carriers for amounts collected from them for loss or damage to property they transported at Government expense; also included are other claims arising from the activity of a DoD Component. However, the Director of the Office of Personnel Management performs these functions for claims involving civilian employees' compensation and leave; and the Administrator of General Services performs these functions for claims involving civilian employees' travel, transportation, and relocation expenses.

² Claims under this statute are actually settled under the authority in 31 U.S.C. 3702 (reference (a)), because there is no specific settlement authority in the statute.